

inspection report

Residential Special School (not registered as
a Children's Home)

Woodeaton Manor School

Woodeaton

Oxford

Oxfordshire

OX3 9TS

8th March 2005

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Launched in April 2004, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is the single inspectorate for social care in England.

The Commission combines the work formerly done by the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI), the SSI/Audit Commission Joint Review Team and the National Care Standards Commission.

The role of CSCI is to:

- Promote improvement in social care
- Inspect all social care - for adults and children - in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Publish annual reports to Parliament on the performance of social care and on the state of the social care market
- Inspect and assess 'Value for Money' of council social services
- Hold performance statistics on social care
- Publish the 'star ratings' for council social services
- Register and inspect services against national standards
- Host the Children's Rights Director role.

Inspection Methods & Findings

SECTION B of this report summarises key findings and evidence from this inspection. The following 4-point scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The 4-point scale ranges from:

- 4 - Standard Exceeded (Commendable)
- 3 - Standard Met (No Shortfalls)
- 2 - Standard Almost Met (Minor Shortfalls)
- 1 - Standard Not Met (Major Shortfalls)

'O' or blank in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

'9' in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not applicable.

'X' is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School

Woodeaton Manor School

Address

Woodeaton, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX3 9TS

Tel No:

01865 558722

Fax No:

01865 311561

Email Address:

Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school

Oxfordshire County Council Education Department

Name of Head

Anne Pearce

CSCI Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

9 March
2004

Date of Inspection Visit		8th March 2005	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:30 am	
Name of CSCI Inspector	1	Merryl Wahogo	093888
Name of CSCI Inspector	2		
Name of CSCI Inspector	3		
Name of CSCI Inspector	4		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):			
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Anne Pearce	

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Residential Special Schools are subject to inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) to determine whether the welfare of children (i.e. those aged under 18) is adequately safeguarded and promoted while they are accommodated by the school.

Inspections assess the extent to which the school is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools, published by the Secretary of State under Section 87C of the Children Act 1989, and other relevant requirements of the Children Act 1989 as amended. Residential Special Schools are not registered as children's homes unless they accommodate, or arrange accommodation for, one or more children for more than 295 days a year.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of Woodeaton Manor School

The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

- Inspection methods used
- Key findings and evidence
- Overall ratings in relation to the standards
- Recommended action by the school
- Advisory recommendations on boarding welfare
- Summary of the findings
- Report of the lay assessor (where relevant)
- The Head's response and proposed action plan to address findings

INSPECTION VISITS

Inspections are undertaken in line with the agreed regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Children Act 1989 as amended, with additional visits as required.

The report represents the inspector's findings from the evidence found at the specified inspection dates.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

Woodeaton now provides education for 39 children with emotional and social difficulties although the inspector understands that funding is still based on the school's previous designation as MLD. These, then, are children who may exhibit extreme behaviours. Woodeaton also provides residential places, for a maximum of four nights a week, for a proportion of the children, numbering nine at the time of the inspection, some of whom are part-time, despite a capacity for 12.

This report must be read in the context of the school having been informed that it would remain open (it had been under threat of closure for two years) as a school for children with emotional and social difficulties only on the penultimate day of the summer term. The new designation brings children with considerably more challenging behaviour than the previous intake. The inspector understands that the school has been put into the position of having to admit pupils who fall outside the categories previously agreed between the school and the local education authority. The school now finds itself providing a service to an unduly wide range of children.

The inspector considers that although staff were working extremely well with the children at the time of the inspection, consideration must be given to the resources the school receives in order to enable it to better address the challenges it faces.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

Pupils reported very high levels of satisfaction including comments such as “This is the best school I’ve been to so far”.

The school has exceeded minimum standards in six areas which are the development of its statement of purpose, the responses of staff to pupils’ acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, the admissions and leaving procedures, the activities available to youngsters, the individual support given to children and training opportunities given to and taken up by care staff.

The commitment shown to care staff by the head teacher, which is reflected in the commitment they show to the pupils, is highly commendable.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

The kitchen needs a huge amount of work to ensure that it is not a risk to health and safety. Also major investment is needed to bring the buildings up to required maintenance levels and standards. The inspector understands that the County Council has committed a considerable sum of money to ensure that the conservation plan identified by English Heritage is carried out. It is to be hoped that all repairs identified in this report are given a high priority as they relate to health and safety issues.

Those staff who are neither residential social workers nor teaching staff should be offered some critical training opportunities, alongside other staff. In particular they should receive training in responding to challenging behaviour and in child protection.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

The head teacher and staff are to be highly commended for having maintained a good quality of care in all aspects of school life in the face of great difficulties. It is a pity that more of the children are not yet being allowed by the local education authority to access the boarding facilities, despite the evidence of this being potentially hugely beneficial to some of the children and therefore beneficial to the stability of the whole school.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

NO

**Local Education Authority
Secretary of State**

NO

NO

The grounds for any Notification to be made are:

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

YES

No	Standard	Recommended actions	

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how recommended actions are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Identified below are the actions recommended on issues addressed in the main body of the report in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders adequately in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. The references below are to the relevant Standards. Non-implementation of recommended action can lead to future statutory notification of failure to safeguard and promote welfare.

No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
1	RS4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school prospectus and pupil information pack should contain clear information as to how to make a complaint with separate instructions for complaints relating to boarding as opposed to education. The school should introduce a complaints book and a compliments book. 	30 May 05 30 May 05
2	RS5	There should be annual whole-school training in child protection of at least one half-day including all categories of staff.	Ongoing
3	RS10	All staff as above should be offered training and support in dealing with verbally abusive behaviour.	Ongoing
4	RS23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The kitchen should be assessed by an appropriate individual to ensure that it is fit for purpose and that any advice arising from this assessment is fully implemented by the local authority. A health and safety risk assessment should be carried out as a matter of urgency in relation to the use of the long low table in the kitchen as the main work surface, and that if it is not appropriate for the safe use by staff an alternative work surface is provided. 	30 Sept 05 30 May 05
5	RS25	Appropriate locks should be fitted to the bathroom doors in the boys' boarding area.	30 May 05

6	RS24	The school should address the need to replace carpets in the poolroom and family room areas before these become a health and safety hazard.	30 Sept 05
7	RS30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school should address the needs of domestic staff for support in relation to the new intake of pupils The cook and caretaker should receive formal supervision sessions 	30 May 05 30 May 05

ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

Identified below are advisory recommendations on welfare matters addressed in the main body of the report and based on the National Minimum Standards, made for consideration by the school.

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1	RS5	The school should add to its analysis of sanctions an indicator of whether violence has been directed towards a student or towards a member of staff.
2	RS23	Consideration should be given by the local authority to the refurbishment of the kitchen as a matter of urgency.

Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. RS10 refers to standard 10.

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS**

The following inspection methods were used in the production of this report

Direct Observation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Accommodation	NO
Pupil Guided Tour of Recreational Areas	NO

Checks with other Organisations

• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	NO
• School Doctor	NO
• Independent Person	YES
• Chair of Governors	YES
Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	NO
Individual interviews with key staff	NO
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	NA
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	YES
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	7/3/05
Time of Inspection	0930
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	20.25
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	2

school, have also been taken into account in preparing this report.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Age Range of Boarding Pupils **From** **To**

NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

BOYS

GIRLS

TOTAL

Number of separate Boarding Houses

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the CSCI assessment of the extent to which standards have been met. The following scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The scale ranges from:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 4 - Standard Exceeded | (Commendable) |
| 3 - Standard Met | (No Shortfalls) |
| 2 - Standard Almost Met | (Minor Shortfalls) |
| 1 - Standard Not Met | (Major Shortfalls) |

"0" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

"9" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not applicable.

"X" is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- Children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils.

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

The school has a written Statement of Purpose, which accurately describes what the school sets out to do for those children it accommodates, and the manner in which care is provided. The Statement can be made up of other documents, e.g., Letter of Approved Arrangements and school prospectus, which are required to include specific information.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
The inspector was given a copy of the school's prospectus for 2004/05 which contains all necessary information, also a pupil guide illustrated with lots of bright pictures and a separate document headed "Engaging Children in a Positive Way Forward", which sets out the ethos and facilities of the school as a whole. These are all of a high quality and are very accessible.		

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way that the school is run. No child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views.
- Children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled.
- Children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration.

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.9)

Children's opinions, and those of their families or significant others, are sought over key decisions which are likely to affect their daily life and their future. Feedback is given following consultations.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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Although it is somewhat early in the life of new pupils in this school to have a thorough picture, the inspector was satisfied that staff continued to consult children whenever possible. One pupil stated in his questionnaire "the boys chose the colour when the boys' toilets were repainted"; another stated "they are asked what treats (activities) they would like to do". Another pupil said that he was happy that the head teacher had listened to their request for having mobile phones in residence and had no complaints about the conditions surrounding this.

Staff had consulted members of the Muslim community in order to work out how to honour one child's religious needs. This child is now taken to Islamic studies regularly and the school has been able to obtain halal meat for his diet.

The inspector understands that the children devised a new addition to the reward system (described in Standard 10) in an assembly at the beginning of the spring term.

Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.11)

The school and staff respect a child's wish for privacy and confidentiality so far as is consistent with good parenting and the need to protect the child.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The inspector was pleased to note that, even after knocking on bedroom doors, staff do not routinely enter the room, but hover in the doorway. There are clear guidelines for staff in respect of privacy and confidentiality. There was no evidence of breach of confidentiality in any respect.

Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.8)

Children know how and feel able to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of living in the school, and feel confident that any complaint is addressed seriously and without delay.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Whilst pupils seemed to be clear about being able to complain, the pupil information pack does not spell out how to complain. So one pupil states in his questionnaire that his teacher told him how to complain and that he would complain to one of the residential social workers or to the head teacher if necessary, and the inspector is convinced that this is widely understood amongst the children. Nevertheless, the children's information pack and the prospectus should contain more detailed information and this will be recommended in this report.

Although no complaints were made to the inspector by the children or any parents, and none were reported by the head of care, this report will recommend that the school introduces a complaints book and also a compliments book.

Number of complaints about care at the school recorded over last 12 months:

0

Number of above complaints substantiated:

X

Number of complaints received by CSCI about the school over last 12 months:

X

Number of above complaints substantiated:

X

CHILD PROTECTION

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse.
- Children are protected from bullying by others.
- All significant events relating to the protection of children accommodated in the school are notified by the Head of the school to the appropriate authorities.
- Children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded positively to on return.

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.12)

There are systems in place in the school that aim to prevent abuse of children and suspicions or allegations of abuse are properly responded to. These are known and understood by all staff (including junior, ancillary, volunteer and agency staff).

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The inspector spoke to the nominated teacher for child protection and was pleased to note her active involvement in the recording and analysis of sanctions. This is done at Woodeaton because of an understanding that a change in the frequency or severity of difficult behaviour may be symptomatic of a need to look into child protection issues. Whilst the analysis is already of a high standard, this report will make an advisory recommendation that the school adds an indicator of whether violence has been directed towards a student or towards a member of staff.

The inspector gained the impression that there is a high commitment to safeguarding children within this school, evidenced by up-to-date information in a supplement to the whole school policy on child protection, as well as staff raising issues around safeguarding children without being prompted. However, whilst the inspector understands that there is a small section of training at the beginning of every school year on child protection, this report will recommend that there is annual, whole-school training of at least one half day, to which all staff, including domestics, should be invited.

The inspector advised the head of care early on in the inspection of the need for a written policy on physical contact – a satisfactory policy had been devised by the end of the inspection.

Number of recorded child protection enquiries initiated by the social services department during the past 12 months:

0

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.5)

The school has, and follows, an anti-bullying policy, with which children and staff are familiar and which is effective in practice. Where possible children in the school contribute to the development of the policy.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

As the new pupil intake has yet to understand and conform to the school's ethos, bullying is more of a problem at Woodeaton than it used to be, according to staff. Nevertheless, the pupils assured the inspector that it was better than in their previous schools. In fact, on occasion, this information was volunteered rather than sought. One boy told the inspector, when asked about bullying in the school, that he had been bullying and that he felt the head teacher had dealt with him "very fairly".

The inspector saw notices about bullying and the school's values on the walls of the boys' bedrooms.

At the time the pupil questionnaires were filled in the school still did not have its full complement of children, nor as many children as were present on the day of the inspection. The figure below may therefore not accurately represent the current situation regarding bullying.

Some children reflected the concern of many of the staff about the level of swearing and verbal abuse, but the inspector gained the impression that the children felt the staff had a handle on the problem.

Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied

66 %

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)

All significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified by the Head of the school or designated person to the appropriate authorities.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

No notifications have been made or have needed to be made since the last inspection. However, the inspector is satisfied that systems are in place to do so.

NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO CSCI DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:

- conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children
- serious harm to a child
- serious illness or accident of a child
- serious incident requiring police to be called

0

0

0

0

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9)

The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Although 259 unauthorised absences have been recorded for the entire school, these figures must be understood in the context of two year 11 pupils who are simply refusing to attend at all. Furthermore, a higher level of unauthorised absences must be expected at the beginning of a substantially new intake of children with emotional and social difficulties. The inspector is satisfied that unauthorised absences are dealt with appropriately.

The figure of 0 quoted below relates to unauthorised absences from the boarding sector of the school and therefore reflects well on the quality of care.

Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:

0

CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect.
- Children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff response to inappropriate behaviour.

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

Relationships between staff and children are based on mutual respect and understanding and clear professional and personal boundaries which are effective for both the individuals and the group.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The inspector was impressed with the calm and quiet way in which staff responded to difficult behaviour during the inspection. Communication between staff and children, for example at meal times, was seen to be warm and positive and wholly professional.</p> <p>Staff reported attending a number of courses which assist in positive care and control.</p> <p>The inspector spoke to a pupil who joined the school in October, and he said “The school is perfect and doesn’t have a downside”.</p>		

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.26)

Staff respond positively to acceptable behaviour, and where the behaviour of children is regarded as unacceptable by staff, it is responded to by constructive disciplinary measures, which are approved by the Head of Care.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****4**

Whilst the school has continued with an excellent rewards system described in previous reports, it has further improved on this. The head teacher told the inspector that children can now earn “up to 100 points per day” leading to increased choices for Friday afternoon activities.

Children report that sanctions are fair and reasonable and the record of sanctions is extremely well kept. The inspector was shown the recording and analysis of sanctions which allow staff to see clearly any marked deterioration or improvement in children’s behaviour over a given period. The system devised by the school, which matches very exactly the sanction (and how it is recorded) to the behaviour, is excellent practice.

All staff spoken to expressed concern about the high levels of verbal abuse now being experienced in the school, and this concern was echoed by some of the children. The inspector considers that staff are responding in a very controlled and measured way but that the school now needs to offer training and support to staff, such as domestic staff, as well as care and education staff to enable them to feel confident to deal appropriately with such behaviour. This is recommended in this report.

QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes.
- The school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school.
- Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within school and in the local community.
- Children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted.
- Children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs.
- Children wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money.

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

Admission and leaving processes are planned and agreed with the child – and as appropriate, with parents and carers and placing authorities – as far as possible and handled with sensitivity and care by those concerned.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

In the opinion of the inspector, the school has gone to great lengths to ensure that parents understand the value of children attending and to maximise the chance that children will settle in. This has been done partly by meetings with parents and partly by producing detailed and attractive information to parents and pupils.

The inspector was told by the head of care that children who are leaving have always had their residency gradually reduced to one night a week and have had staff accompanying them to new settings. They also have a celebratory leaving meal which the children choose.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)

Care staff and the school's residential provision and activities actively contribute to individual children's educational progress, and care staff actively support children's education, ensuring regular attendance, punctuality and a minimum of interruption during the school day.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The children reported being able to get help with homework, when necessary, from the staff. Staff explained that they spend half an hour in the classroom with children at the end of the day to get a sense of how the child has performed and behaved. This assists them in backing up children's learning and strengthens relationships between care staff and teaching staff.

One residential social worker attends each daily school staff meeting in order to facilitate mutual understanding between care and educational staff. Care staff take one child to Islamic studies as mentioned under Standard 2.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.9)

Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within the school and in the local community.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

The school has been innovative in creating evening activities to which siblings are invited and after which some are allowed to sleepover. These have reportedly been a huge success.

Children report that they enjoy going to Didcot Waves and also enjoy going ice-skating, golfing and shopping, going to the woods (Yarnton Park) and going out on bikes. Some were particularly enthusiastic about visits to Laser Quest and a local youth club. Within the school there is a pool table at which the inspector enjoyed a game with one of the boarders. In the same room there is also table football. Children are also allowed to play computer games at night and were seen to be taking advantage of this opportunity on a supervised basis.

The school has introduced a new timetable such that the morning break is shorter than it used to be and is taken within the children's classrooms, not outside. This was in response to staff observing that most bullying and fighting was taking place outside, where behaviour was most difficult to control.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.25)

The school actively promotes the health care of each child and meets any intimate care needs.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

The head teacher and staff spoken to were enthusiastic about a number of innovations designed to improve the health and well being of all pupils including day pupils. Thus there is now breakfast for the whole school, ensuring that all pupils have the best chance of starting the day well-nourished, and all children are offered omega-3 capsules which most do take. Staff spoken to believed that both these measures had lead to some improvement in children's' behaviour and performance.

Children's placement plans include sections on health and medical needs and the school was seen to have maintained a good system of administering medication and recording this. Medicines are now stored in a different part of the school but even more securely than previously.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.15)

Children are provided with adequate quantities of suitably prepared wholesome and nutritious food, having regard to their needs and wishes, and have the opportunity to learn to prepare their own meals. Where appropriate special dietary needs due to health, religious persuasion, racial origin or cultural background are met, including the choice of a vegetarian meal for children who wish it.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

Children spoken to were enthusiastic about the school breakfasts, which they said sometimes include porridge and cooked food. The inspector enjoyed a breakfast of toast and scrambled egg and baked beans, with tea, but observed children mostly drinking juice. They were also eating cereals and toast and a fruit basket was available at this and all other meals. One boy stated that he liked the food "because it is homemade" and that the dining arrangements were "well-organised compared to my previous school".

The inspector also enjoyed a cooked lunch which had meat and vegetarian options and a choice of cooked vegetables or salad. There was also a choice of fruit crumble and custard, yoghurt or fresh fruit. The inspector missed the evening meal because discussions overran but was provided with sandwiches. Menus were seen and were entirely satisfactory.

The morning snack is now free (as opposed to a tuck shop where children pay for snacks) and the head teacher reported that most children choose fruit. The inspector was also told that evening snacks are now cereal bars instead of toast.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.7)

Children are provided for adequately on an individual basis and encouraged to exercise their own preferences in the choice of clothing and personal requisites. Children who require assistance to choose what they wear and/or how they spend their money are provided with the assistance they need, in a way that maximises their choice.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

This standard is of minimal relevance since children do not board at weekends or during holidays. Nevertheless they are allowed to change into their own clothes after school.

CARE PLANNING AND PLACEMENT PLAN

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school.
- Children's needs, development and progress are recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions.
- There are adequate records of both the staff and child groups of the school.
- In accordance with their wishes, children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their parents and families while living away from home at school.
- Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.
- Children receive individual support when they need it.

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)

There is a written placement plan specifying how the school will care for each boarding pupil in accordance with his or her assessed needs, the school cares for that child in accordance with that plan, monitors progress in relation to that plan, and updates that plan as necessary.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The inspector was pleased to note that great efforts had been made to improve on placement plans, which are now very informative and clear. The head of care reported that the process of devising the improvements with a senior residential social worker had been useful. Files were seen to have been updated within recent months. A separate file called "the care plan" includes targets for two terms (the school is following the six-term year) and also self-assessments of skills and needs by the children.

The inspector was impressed by the use of self-assessment as it encourages children to be actively engaged in managing their own progress.

The inspector saw log books in which staff recorded evening activities and how the boys had managed these. As the intake had changed so much, it was clear to the inspector that staff were feeling they still had a very great deal to learn about each child's needs and how best to support them, and considerable concern was expressed about how steep this learning curve was proving to be.

The inspector briefly encountered one child whom the school had been required to admit, whose needs were such that he had to have 2:1 supervision and was unable to attend classes. Despite all this, staff had managed to facilitate his forming relationships with one or two of the other pupils who understand that they have a special role in befriending him. This has reportedly been beneficial to those pupils as well, and certainly one of them spoke to the inspector about this with some pride.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.5)

Each child has a permanent private and secure record of their history and progress which can, in compliance with legal requirements for safeguards, be seen by the child.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Files were seen by the inspector and largely contained all the necessary information. It has to be said that some children had arrived at the school with too little paperwork and that the school is struggling to compile all the relevant details.

Files were seen to be kept securely and the inspector is confident that children could see them if they requested this, because of the ethos of the school.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)

The school maintains clear and accurate records on the staff and child groups of the school, and major events affecting the school and children resident there.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Files were seen within the main school office. There was a little work to be done to tidy up staff files (one or two documents were out of place) but generally references, police checks, etc, were all on record.

The inspector did not spend much time on this standard because, in all fairness, the school has had to prioritise pupil welfare and it would be surprising if records were in perfect order.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)

Subject to their wishes, children are positively encouraged and enabled by the school to maintain contact with their parents and other family members (unless there are welfare concerns) while living at school.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

9

This standard is not relevant in the current situation.

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.2)

Where a pupil is in care and will be leaving care on leaving the school, the school agrees with the young person's responsible authority what contribution it should make to implement any Pathway or other plan for the pupil before the pupil leaves school. These arrangements are in line with that young person's needs, and the school implements its contribution where feasible from at least a year before the pupil is expected to leave care or move to independent living. The school works with any Personal Advisor for the child.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

9

This standard is not applicable.

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.13)

All children are given individualised support in line with their needs and wishes, and children identified as having particular support needs, or particular problems, receive help, guidance and support when needed or requested.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

In view of the unusual and new range of needs the school now finds itself handling, the inspector was hugely impressed by the children's enthusiasm for their care. One child said "I like being here and the teachers are nice". Another told the inspector that he liked "everything about the school".

The inspector was pleased that one child felt able to request a chance to speak with the inspector and was facilitated to do this by the staff. This child was not needing a space to complain; on the contrary he was wanting to tell the inspector how good it was at the school.

All the children asked were very clear about being able to tell their careworker or member of the teaching staff if there was anything bothering them.

The inspector had a long conversation with the educational psychologist for the school, who has a very good relationship with the head and who works hard on behalf of the school. She was full of praise for the way the school was managing children whose needs had defeated other schools. She described how she had worked with the headteacher to define a group of children who were not getting a good service elsewhere, and whose needs Woodeaton was well-suited to providing for. This had been agreed with the local education authority but she said she was disappointed that the latter had, nevertheless, insisted the school must accept not only very different students but some who they had actually decided not to take.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children live in well-designed, pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.
- Children live in accommodation that is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.
- Children are able to carry out their ablutions in privacy and with dignity.
- Children live in schools that provide physical safety and security.

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

The school is located, designed and of a size and layout that is in keeping with its Statement of Purpose. It serves the needs of the children and provides the sort of environment most helpful to each child's development, and is sufficient for the number of children.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	1
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This school is located within extensive and beautiful grounds. The inspector has always found the children to be very appreciative of this and considers that it offers a peaceful setting which maximises children's chances of feeling valued, especially given the ethos of the school. The school office is now located directly opposite the main entrance and therefore allows staff to monitor who is going in and out of the school. This also allows the administration staff to work together, whereas previously they were located in separate offices.

Woodeaton Manor is a Grade 2 listed building and, as such, it is not possible to make it wheelchair-accessible, nor to make alterations without the permission of English Heritage. The school had to prove to English Heritage that they could manage the behaviour of a different intake of students such that damage would not be caused to the building, before agreement was reached that the school would reopen with its present designation.

The inspectors were very concerned by the physical state of the kitchen, which was one of the worst they had ever seen. The inspectors can understand that whilst the future of the school was being debated there was little or no investment in the kitchen, but now that the future of the school has been secured, considerable attention needs to be placed upon refurbishing and upgrading this vital facility within the school.

During a visit to the kitchen it was observed that:

- The flooring was badly damaged and there was damage to the areas where the floor meets the walls
- Missing and broken wall tiles
- Peeling paint
- Cracks and holes in the wall
- A rotten door frame that was completely rotted through at floor level
- Rusting metal supports to sinks
- Some work surfaces were lifting
- Flooding in the wash room when it is being used
- Exposed pipes
- Damaged ceilings
-

In addition the main work surface consisted of a long central table. This appeared to be too low a surface to allow for the staff to work comfortably and this needs to be assessed to ensure that the health of kitchen staff is not adversely affected.

The kitchen was clean and staff are to be commended for the work that they do within such a poor environment. This report will make two recommendations and an advisory recommendation in an attempt to address these issues.

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.19)

The school provides adequate good quality and well-maintained accommodation for boarding pupils, which is consistent with their needs.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>The girls boarding area was not being used at the time of the inspection but was visited by an inspector. It was found to be homely and the rooms were seen to be well decorated and ready for use if needed. The inspector noticed that a pane of glass was slipping from the window frame and that there was a gap of between half and one centimetre at the top of the pane of glass. This will need to be addressed before the area is reopened. . One of the bedrooms did not have a safety film on the window and this too should be rectified before the bedroom is brought into use – the inspector understands that this room was previously used as an office.</p> <p>The inspector also saw two bedrooms in the annexe which had new pine beds. The boys said they liked them and sleep well in them. The inspector also saw the accommodation in the cottage where another two boys board, which again had new beds but of a different style. All the rooms felt very homely and the inspector found the boarders to be relaxed and happy. Each bedroom displayed notices about bullying and the school's values and also the Childline and Commission for Social Care Inspection phone numbers.</p>		

The school needs major investment to bring the buildings up to required maintenance levels and standards. It is the view of the inspectors that there has been considerable underinvestment by the local authority in this area and there were signs of damp within some areas of the building and a general lack of refurbishment, so that the building in some areas is dated and tatty. This is despite the best efforts and work of staff within the school, who are to be commended for the efforts they have made to keep the school clean and to maintain a homely environment.

The inspector understands that English Heritage has provided a conservation plan and the finances to accomplish this, and the school development plan states that this will be adopted in full.

Carpets in the poolroom and family room were found to be very worn and stained. This report will recommend that replacement of these carpets be addressed as any further deterioration may present a safety hazard.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.7)

The school has sufficient baths, showers and toilets, all of good standard and suitable to meet the needs of the children. The school has appropriate changing and washing facilities for incontinent children where necessary.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

The inspectors saw the bathing and toilet area. The former are ample in number and in a reasonable state of repair and the latter have been refurbished and are in a good state of repair. . Both the boys' and unoccupied girls' boarding areas have laundry facilities.

There have been no reported problems in relation to privacy and dignity. However, the baths in the boys boarding area did not have appropriate locks to ensure privacy. This report will recommend that appropriate locks be fitted.

Separate toilet facilities are available for adult visitors. The hot water in one area was tested and found to be at 41.7 degrees. The school has a system for the regular testing of water temperatures to ensure that the hot water outlets remain close to 43 degrees.

The school has identified one set of washing facilities within the boy's boarding area that needs to be upgraded and the inspectors concur that the proposed changes will make a considerable improvement to this facility.

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.10)

Positive steps are taken to keep children, staff and visitors safe from risk from fire and other hazards, in accordance with Health and Safety and Fire legislation and guidance.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

Children and staff were able to answer questions about emergency evacuation procedures in case of fire. The fire log showed fire drills recorded in May, July and Sept 2004 and January and February 2005, but the number of employees and the total number of people present were not recorded on some occasions. Quarterly services to the fire alarm system were noted for March, July and October.

The inspector saw the log of annual services to the emergency lighting system which included the last date of 28th January 2005.

Outside of the annex building, part of which is the boys' boarding house, there is a large water storage pond that is made of concrete and netted. Some of the fencing to this area is damaged and the concrete walls are also in a state of disrepair. The pond is a safety measure to ensure access to water in the event of a fire and it is therefore important that it be made safe and that this is done as soon as possible.

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- There are careful selection and vetting of all staff, volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers
- Children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently.
- Children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs.
- Children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare.

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.9)

Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those employed on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with the children in the school includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (at Standard or Enhanced level as appropriate to their role in the school), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The inspector was aware that no new care staff had been recruited. Files for two gap students were seen and these contained all the necessary information and checks.

The school is to be commended for having managed to retain its care team over this very uncertain extended and difficult period.

Total number of care staff:

5

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

0

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

The school is staffed at all times of the day and night, at or above the minimum level specified under standard 28.2. Records of staff actually working in the school demonstrate achievement of this staffing level.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Clearly in view of the comments above and the reduction in boarders, staffing has been adequate at all times.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)

Staff receive training and development opportunities that equip them with the skills required to meet the needs of the children and the purpose of the school.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

The head teacher explained that she had made use of time available to care staff, because of the changes, to send them on training. Care staff told the inspector that they had attended courses on ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder); children with trauma; increasing emotional literacy; bereavement counselling; annual restraint training and child protection training.

The inspector has been impressed by the commitment of the head teacher to making all relevant courses available to her staff, and by the readiness of staff to take up these opportunities.

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)

All staff, including domestic staff and the Head of the school, are properly accountable and supported.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

The inspector regards the stability of the staff group as evidence of how well they feel supported, and has been made aware of very clear lines of accountability from care staff to the head of care, from the latter to the head teacher and of course from the head teacher to the governing body.

It has to be said that the domestic staff report not having felt adequately supported in relation to coping with a rapid influx of verbally abusive pupils. The inspector considers that this needs addressing but can also understand that senior management were obliged to prioritise in favour of care/teaching staff in the circumstances. This report will recommend that the school addresses the support needs of the domestic staff.

Additionally the inspector is persuaded that two part-time cleaners cannot adequately clean the entire premises, especially given that there are additional cleaning requirements in the dining rooms now that there is a whole-school breakfast each day. It was clear that this development was problematic for the cooks as well as the cleaners in terms of pressure on their resources, despite them all believing that it was a good and necessary development for the children, and having gone the extra mile to maintain standards of hygiene and cleanliness.

Finally, this report will recommend formal supervision sessions for the cook and caretaker.

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children receive the care and services they need from competent staff.
- Children enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools.
- The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school.

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.17)

The school is organised, managed and staffed in a manner that delivers the best possible childcare.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

In view of the school's circumstances it has not been possible for staff to pursue NVQs. Nevertheless, the inspector is impressed with the quality and skills of the staff and the school's commitment to their development.

All other aspects of how the school is managed are entirely satisfactory.

Percentage of care staff with relevant NVQ or equivalent child care qualification:

X

%

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

The Commission for Social Care Inspection is informed within 24 hours if a receiver, liquidator or trustee in bankruptcy becomes responsible for the school. Such persons on becoming responsible for the school have ensured that the school continues to be managed on a day-to-day basis by a Head who meets recruitment and qualification requirements for a Head under these Standards. Such a temporary Head must make sure that the operation of the school meets the requirements of these standards in relation to the day to day running of the school.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

As referred to in previous standards, the records of sanctions, physical interventions and so on are well monitored by the nominated member of staff for child protection. The inspector was made aware that this monitoring takes place with the head teacher and the impression was gained that the head teacher was very well-informed.

The inspector was given a copy of the school development plan.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.7)

The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body receive a written report on the conduct of the school from a person visiting the school on their behalf every half term.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

The inspector spoke with the chair of governors at some length. He expressed his concerns about the school becoming “a dumping ground” and also about “the unwarranted pressure from the local education authority” to absorb a great number of new pupils in a very short space of time. He also told the inspector that there had been an agreement to have a multi-agency approach for the school, involving health, social services and education, but that this had not materialised.

The chair of governors has conducted the necessary half-termly unannounced visits and recorded these on reports that were shown to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

Lay Assessor

Signature

Date

PART D

HEAD'S RESPONSE

D.1 Head's comments/confirmation relating to the content and accuracy of the report for the above inspection.

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 8th March 2005 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

The content reflects totally the provision here at Woodeaton and, whilst we have not scored as highly this year as in past years, the new designation and all that this entails has been a major contribution to this.

The report is a very honest and astutely accurate description of progress to date. More importantly, the recommendations are all about improving the provision for our pupils and, as such, are wholly appropriate.

The way in which the inspection was conducted by the team was exemplary – very thorough but with such high regard and sensitivity for both staff and our pupils. It was a very supportive experience.

Action taken by the CSCI in response to Head's comments:

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the provider

YES

Head's comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report

YES

Head's comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate

Note:

In instances where there is a major difference of view between the Inspector and the Head both views will be made available on request to the Area Office.

D.2

Status of the Head's Action Plan at time of publication of the final inspection report:

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

Other:

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

Head's statement of agreement/comments: Please complete the relevant section that applies.

D.3.1 I _____ of _____
confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation
of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that
I agree with the recommended actions made and will seek to comply with
these.

Print Name _____

Signature

Designation

Date _____

Or

D.3.2 I _____ of _____
am unable to confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) for the following reasons:

--

Print Name _____

Signature

Designation

Date _____

Note: In instance where there is a profound difference of view between the Inspector and the Head both views will be reported. Please attach any extra pages, as applicable.

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